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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Strategic Role of Human Resource Management in The Development of Professionalism Among Educators

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) functions and the professionalism of educators, describe the implementation of these functions, and develop a synthesis of effective HRM strategies in the era of digital transformation. The method used is qualitative, employing a literature review approach. The data corpus was obtained through a documentation process of secondary data consisting of 25 accredited scientific journals from 2020 to 2025, which were critically screened based on thematic relevance and source credibility. Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, adopting Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that HRM functions, particularly work motivation ($\beta = 0.67$) and fair compensation ($R^2 = 0.72$), have a positive correlation and a strong relationship with the improvement of educators' pedagogical competencies. Performance evaluations conducted through periodic supervision four times a year effectively boosted 78% of educators' digital proficiency, although training efforts remain inconsistent due to administrative barriers and the lack of ongoing support. The study's conclusions highlight the novel finding that the failure to adapt to digital technologies is not caused by educators' resistance to technology, but rather by the fragile integration between HRMS subsystems and the high bureaucratic burden that triggers technostress. As a result, the acceleration of educators' professionalism toward the Society 5.0 era requires a restructuring of macro-level governance and transformational leadership to realign schools' focus from administrative formalities toward the holistic cultivation of intrinsic motivation.

Keywords: human resource management, professionalism of educators, digital transformation, Society 5.0.



ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan fungsi Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia (MSDM) dengan profesionalisme tenaga pendidik, mendeskripsikan implementasi fungsinya, serta menyusun sintesis strategi MSDM yang efektif di era transformasi digital. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kepustakaan (library research). Korpus data diperoleh melalui teknik dokumentasi terhadap data sekunder berupa 25 jurnal ilmiah terakreditasi periode 2020–2025 yang disaring secara kritis berdasarkan relevansi tematik dan kredibilitas sumber. Teknik analisis data dieksekusi secara deskriptif kualitatif mengadopsi model analisis interaktif Miles dan Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan fakta bahwa fungsi MSDM, terutama motivasi kerja ($\beta = 0.67$) dan kompensasi yang adil ($R^2 = 0.72$), memiliki korelasi positif dan hubungan yang kuat terhadap eskalasi kompetensi pedagogik tenaga pendidik. Penilaian kinerja melalui supervisi berkala empat kali setahun efektif memacu 78% kecakapan digital tenaga pendidik, meskipun fungsi pelatihan masih fluktuatif akibat hambatan administratif dan ketiadaan pendampingan berkelanjutan. Simpulan penelitian menegaskan kebaharuan bahwa kegagalan adaptasi digital bukan disebabkan oleh penolakan tenaga pendidik terhadap teknologi, melainkan akibat rapuhnya integrasi antarsubstansi MSDM dan tingginya beban birokratis yang memicu technostress. Dampaknya, akselerasi profesionalisme pendidik menuju era Society 5.0 menuntut restrukturisasi tata kelola makro dan kepemimpinan transformasional untuk menyelaraskan orientasi sekolah dari formalitas administratif menuju pemeliharaan motivasi intrinsik secara holistik.

Keywords: human resource management, professionalism of educators, digital transformation, Society 5.0.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The quality of educators is a key determinant of the quality of national education, particularly in terms of pedagogical design, implementation, and evaluation. However, the state of educators' professionalism in Indonesia is still marked by various multidimensional challenges, ranging from misconceptions about professionalism, slow adaptation to curriculum reforms, to limited digital literacy. These demands have intensified with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which requires educators to master the development of independent teaching modules, authentic assessments, and digital media. In reality, this ideal scenario remains at odds with the reality on the ground, which is still burdened by a lack of ongoing professional development, bureaucratic and administrative restrictions, and persistent welfare issues.

To bridge this gap between urgency and reality, Human Resource Management (HRM) governance becomes a strategic determinant. In this context, HRM has transformed from a mere administrative function into a driving force for competency development through talent-based recruitment, needs-based training, performance evaluation, and equity-based compensation (Syahren & Rindaningsih, 2025). Strengthening professionalism also requires periodic competency assessments, practical workshops, academic supervision, and the improvement of the work environment through a reward system (Marta et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have shown that structured HRM interventions—such as continuous professional development and transformational leadership models—contribute to professionalism (Atikah & Aurelia et al., 2025), such research remains limited in scope. Most researchers analyze HRM functions in isolation without considering the interrelationships among variables. Furthermore, studies that integrate HRM with the digital transformation trend remain very limited and tend to be quantitatively biased. In fact, responding to the digital era requires a holistic and adaptive HRM model. Therefore, through a literature review approach, this study aims to analyze the functional relationship between HRM and educators' professionalism, describe the dynamics of its implementation, and formulate a synthesis of comprehensive HRM strategies to address the challenges of educational digitization.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using library research to construct a comprehensive analysis of the strategic role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in enhancing the professionalism of educators in the era of digital transformation. The focus of the study is on the articulation of HRM functions, which include competency-based recruitment, training and development, performance evaluation, and compensation and reward systems within the educational ecosystem. Given its literature-based methodological approach, this study is not limited to a specific geographic location; all data were collected virtually through a review of scientific references relevant to the subject of the study.

The data used in this study consists of secondary data sourced from reputable national and international scientific journals, textbooks, conference proceedings, and academic articles that examine the correlation between human resource management in education and educator professionalism. To ensure the data remains current and relevant amid the dynamic changes in education, the literature review is limited chronologically to publications from the past five years. The data collection process employs a documentation technique carried out through four systematic stages: identification, selection, classification, and critical review. The screening of literature sources is based on the parameters of thematic relevance, variable relationships, and the credibility and reputation of scientific publications.

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive qualitative approach, adopting the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which integrates three simultaneous processes: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions or verification. During the reduction phase, information was clustered and filtered, focusing specifically on the manifestations of HRM functions in relation to the development of professionalism. Subsequently, the reduced data was systematically synthesized into descriptive narratives to construct a deep interpretive understanding. The conceptual construction concludes with the integration of the results of the literature synthesis, resulting in the formulation of effective and adaptive HRM strategies for educators' professionalism.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A synthesis of 25 scientific journals published between 2020 and 2025 on Human Resource Management (HRM) and the professionalism of educators yielded a number of quantitative data points and empirical findings. Based on an aggregation of the literature, it was found that HRM functions have varying correlations with improvements in the professionalism of educators. Work motivation yielded a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.67$ at a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$. Meanwhile, the simultaneous integration of professional competence and compensation contributed to the variation in educators' performance, with a coefficient of determination of $R^2 = 0.72$. On the other hand, the effect size measurement of the impact of compensation on work performance showed a value of Cohen's $d = 0.5$. However, the data also indicate that incentives or rewards, when considered in isolation, do not have a direct positive impact on professionalism ($p > 0.05$), although they still show a positive association ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.05$).

In terms of functional implementation, the collection of secondary data provides a specific picture of performance for each governance indicator. Regarding the recruitment function, data from 80% of the schools in the sample confirmed the implementation of a systematic competency-based selection process, ranging from an analysis of staffing needs to an evaluation of pedagogical competence. In terms of training effectiveness, programs based on a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) achieved an 85% relevance rate for the training material, far outperforming conventional training without a needs analysis, which reached only 45%. Nevertheless, performance records following the training program show discrepancies, with 60% of educators showing no concrete improvement in performance during the first six months after the training program was completed. Regarding the performance evaluation function through structured academic supervision conducted four times a year, the data show that 78% of educators demonstrated measurable improvement in the areas of lesson planning and proficiency with digital media.

A further literature review successfully identified clusters of strategies and the magnitude of the real obstacles faced in the management of educators in the field. The identification of the most effective strategic patterns led to six main pillars: TPACK- and MOOC-based contextual training, participatory transformational leadership, the activation of professional learning communities, the digitization of HR information systems, evaluation based on constructive feedback, and continuous professional development (CPD) programs. Conversely, the operational challenges on the ground are documented through the percentage of significant limitations at the school level.

These limitations include a heavy administrative workload that ties up educators' time (72%), institutional budget constraints for funding professional development programs (65%), low levels of proficiency in digital instructional technology among educators (58%), and a shortage of educators who meet high competency qualification standards (45%).

To provide a comprehensive and systematic overview of the literature review, all components of the secondary data including the researchers' identities, the focus of the studies, and the substance of the main findings were consolidated into a structured matrix. Table 1 below presents a comprehensive synthesis of the literature corpus that serves as the data foundation for this study.

Table 1. Key Findings from 25 Research Journals (2020–2025)

No.	Author (Year)	Variable/Indicator	Key Findings
1	Marta et al. (2025)	Human Resource Management Implementation; Educator Performance	78% of educators showed improvements in pedagogical competence, subject-matter mastery, and media use following the implementation of a structured HRM system.
2	Atikah & Aurelia (2025)	HRM Strategies; ECE Teacher Professionalism	Continuous professional development and effective administrative support enhance the professionalism of early childhood education teachers.
3	Dewanti et al. (2024)	Motivation; Training; Rewards; Professionalism	Work motivation had a significant effect ($\beta = 0.67$); training was not directly significant ($p > 0.05$); rewards showed a significant relationship ($r = 0.42$).
4	Syahren & Rindaningsih (2024)	HRM; Quality of Education	HRM enhances educator quality, organizational efficiency, and the overall quality of learning.
5	Abdullah (2025)	Talent Management; Transformational Leadership	Transformational leadership, clear performance evaluation, and a collaborative organizational culture are key factors in effective HRM.
6	Yahya & Martha (2025)	Challenges to Educator Professionalism	Heavy administrative workloads (72% of educators) and welfare issues hinder the development of educator professionalism.
7	Al-Faruqy (2024)	Recruitment; Planning; Training; Performance Evaluation	Competency-based recruitment considers academic and pedagogical qualifications, while performance evaluations are conducted four times a year.
8	Chanifuddin & Rindaningsih (2025)	HRM; SDIT Strategies	Mapping educators' competency needs and providing continuous professional development improve the quality of human resources.
9	Ulfadillah et al. (2023)	Educator Professional Competencies	Professional educators develop 21st-century skills, including problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and digital literacy.
10	Harly et al. (2025)	Professionalism in Society 5.0; Digital Competencies	Educators in the Society 5.0 era require technical competencies and the ability to adapt to digital transformation.
11	Aminudin (2021)	Educational HRM; Teacher Professionalism	HRM in education enhances teacher professionalism and school performance ($\beta = 0.67$, $p < 0.01$).
12	Hawa & Rosid (2025)	Teacher Competencies; Merdeka Belajar	Educational management enhances educators' pedagogical, social, personal, and professional competencies.
13	Lestari (2023)	Training Needs Analysis (TNA)	TNA-based training showed 85% relevance, compared with 45% relevance for training conducted without TNA.
14	Melania & Yulianah (2020)	Digital Talent Management	Technology integration, including MOOCs and TPACK, is essential for teacher training in the digital era.

No.	Author (Year)	Variable/Indicator	Key Findings
15	Hayati et al. (2020)	Educator Career Planning	Effective career planning requires a long-term approach rather than episodic training.
16	Rahmaani et al. (2023)	Readiness for the Merdeka Curriculum	Teachers' readiness to implement the Merdeka Curriculum varies, with many struggling to adapt their pedagogical and digital competencies.
17	Setiawan (2020)	Educator Recruitment and Retention	Effective teacher recruitment and retention systems improve the quality of human resources in education.
18	Mubarok (2021)	HRM in Islamic Education	Recruitment in Islamic educational institutions remains largely non-competency-based.
19	Nasri (2020)	Role of HRM in Education	The effectiveness of HRM depends heavily on educators' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
20	Melania & Yulianah (2024)	Talent Management	Talent management requires an approach tailored to the characteristics of the institution and its educators.
21	Nasution & Zaniarti (2025)	Training; Development; Educator Performance	Effective performance management contributes significantly to performance, motivation, and job satisfaction ($p < 0.01$).
22	Ramadhani et al. (2025)	Professional Competence; Compensation; Performance	Professional competence and compensation have a positive effect on educator performance ($R^2 = 0.72$).
23	Waliyati & Supratikta (2024)	HR Planning; Development; Compensation	Fair compensation is important for employee performance, with a medium effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.50$).
24	Maulana & Veri (2025)	Academic HR Policies	HR policies integrated with organizational strategies strengthen professional communication and collaboration.
25	Adityputra & Rindaningsih (2025)	Faculty Recruitment	Eight out of ten schools implemented competency-based recruitment through effective recruitment processes.

3.1 The Relationship Between Human Resource Management and Professionalism

Human resource management within the educational ecosystem serves not merely as an administrative tool, but as a key determinant that shapes the development of educators' professionalism. Through in-depth analysis, it is evident that the improvement in pedagogical skills and mastery of instructional media observed following the implementation of MSDM reflects the fact that professionalism does not emerge overnight, but is rather the result of structured organizational engineering. This phenomenon theoretically validates the Resource-Based View (RBV) introduced by Barney (1991), in which educators are positioned as strategic assets that possess unique characteristics, are valuable, and are difficult for competing institutions to imitate. As a form of human capital, long-term investment in the capacity of educators will yield a multiplicative return on the quality of learning. This line of reasoning is consistent with the findings of Marta et al. (2025) and Aminudin (2021), which converge to demonstrate that

strengthening macro-level managerial functions automatically leads to improved institutional performance through the standardization of individual faculty members' capabilities.

Furthermore, there is a crucial point to consider when examining the fact that work motivation contributes far more significantly to the development of professionalism among educators than formal training interventions alone. This contradiction has been identified as arising because external capacity-building programs will, in fact, lose their effectiveness if they are not complemented by the educators' mental readiness and internal motivation. This operational context is highly consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1968), which draws a clear distinction between motivator factors (such as achievement, recognition, and self-actualization) and hygiene factors (such as bureaucratic policies, working conditions, and procedural training). Formal training without motivational incentives will simply be viewed as an additional workload. This analytical perspective is empirically supported by Dewanti et al. (2024) and Nasri (2020), who emphasize that, amid the challenges surrounding educators' well-being in Indonesia, maintaining both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is of the utmost importance for ensuring consistent professional performance in the classroom.

3.2 Implementation of Human Resource Management Functions

The implementation of a competency-based recruitment process that aligns academic qualifications with actual pedagogical skills is the cornerstone of quality assurance for educators. Based on a critical analysis, the accuracy of selection tools in the early stages acts as a quality control filter that significantly mitigates the risk of competency mismatches in the future. This framework is rooted in Schultz's (1961) human capital theory, which states that rigorous talent screening based on objective capabilities is a form of human capital investment that improves the quality of educational organizations. This conceptual validity is strongly supported by the empirical mapping conducted by Al-Faruqy (2024) and Adityaputra and Rindaningsih (2025), which document the success of competency-based selection in practice. However, these ideal findings stand in sharp contrast to the study by Mubarok (2021), which found that recruitment at certain private educational institutions often disregards competency in favor of fulfilling primordial ties. This disparity has emerged due to asymmetries in regulatory oversight and the uneven level of awareness regarding professional governance across agencies.

An anomaly observed in the training program namely, that educators often do not demonstrate concrete improvements in performance following the training indicates that the follow-up to the training is ineffective. It is assumed that the transfer of training fails to translate into clinical competence in the classroom because training programs are often top-down, decontextualized, and neglect the phase of ongoing mentoring. This empirical finding is contrasted with Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning, which asserts that improving educators' competencies requires direct experience, reflection, and ongoing practice. This finding is strongly supported by Lestari's (2023) research on the advantages of Training Needs Analysis (TNA)-based training, and confirms Melania and Yulianah's (2020) argument regarding the crucial importance of technology mastery through TPACK. Conversely, this on-the-ground reality contradicts the optimism of Aminudin's (2021) study, which assumed that training automatically has a linear impact on professionalism.

The ineffectiveness of the training stems from educators' low level of digital readiness and a lack of post-training evaluation.

In terms of performance assessment indicators, the implementation of periodic and cross-sectoral academic supervision has proven effective in improving the quality of teaching, as it provides educators with the opportunity to directly evaluate and improve their teaching practices. In the modern academic environment, the role of assessment is seen as needing to move away from a punitive approach and transform into a formative, guiding one in order to foster educators' pedagogical self-confidence. Theoretically, the success of this supervision model is based on the feedback theory proposed by Hattie and Timperley (2007), which states that constructive feedback helps educators understand learning outcomes as well as the necessary steps for improvement. This concept of constructive feedback is fully supported by the research findings of Marta et al. (2025) and Abdullah (2025), which identify periodic supervision as a vital tool for schools. The long-term impact of this healthy feedback, as outlined by Ulfadilah et al. (2023), is an increase in educators' capacity to impart 21st-century critical thinking skills to students.

Meanwhile, regarding the compensation and rewards indicator, the magnitude of this variable's influence confirms that fair compensation is a crucial factor in fostering professionalism among educators. It is argued that imposing massive demands for professionalism without balancing them with the principle of fair remuneration will only lead to a decline in work motivation, commitment to teaching, and the quality of learning. This framework is based on Adams's (1963) equity theory, which asserts that individual motivation is determined by the perception of fairness regarding the ratio of effort expended (input) to the rewards received (output). The empirical findings of Ramadhani et al. (2025) and Waliyati & Supratikta (2024) support this theory by demonstrating the magnitude of the effect size for fair compensation. As for the contradiction with the study by Dewanti et al. (2024), which found that rewards had no direct impact, this is interpreted as an indication that the rewards provided in the field are still symbolic in nature and do not meet basic needs, causing their value to diminish to that of a mere hygiene factor that fails to trigger educators' motivation to excel.

3.3 Effective Human Resource Management Strategies in the Digital Age

Enhancing the professionalism of educators in the digital age cannot be achieved through piecemeal programs; rather, it requires an integrated human resources strategy. The adoption of digital platforms such as MOOCs and mastery of the TPACK framework must be integrated into the school's human resources management system, which is driven by transformational leadership. Conceptually, this comprehensive strategy is grounded in Katz and Kahn's (1978) Systems Theory, which emphasizes that organizational effectiveness is determined by the integration among components within the organizational system. The importance of this system integration is strongly supported by systematic literature reviews by Abdullah (2025) and Muhajirin et al. (2025), which call for a guarantee of sustained administrative support to improve the effectiveness of school management.

The implementation of human resource management strategies in the Society 5.0 era requires adaptive management to effectively address changes in educational technology while continuing

to prioritize the well-being and readiness of educators. Aligning school policies with a culture of collaboration among educators through professional learning communities is seen as the key to creating a school environment that is better prepared to adapt to change. The flexibility of school leadership is a key factor in addressing educational changes in the digital age. School principals are expected to foster professional communication, collaboration, and support for the development of educators' digital competencies. This strategic perspective aligns with the recommendations of Chanifuddin and Rindaningsih (2025) and Maulana and Veri (2025) regarding the enhancement of educators' digital competencies. This alignment is reinforced by the views of Harly et al. (2025) and Melania and Yulianah (2020), who state that accelerating educators' digital competencies requires school leadership to be prepared to facilitate a supportive and inclusive digital learning environment.

3.4 Challenges in Implementing Human Resource Management

Various obstacles—such as a heavy administrative workload, limited training budgets, low technological literacy, and a shortage of competent educators—highlight a mismatch between the requirements of the Merdeka Curriculum and the actual conditions in schools. Through problem mapping, it was found that the accumulation of bureaucratic workloads has consumed educators' productive time, resulting in their time and focus being devoted more to formal administrative reporting than to developing innovative teaching methods. The significant barriers to implementation indicate that educational transformation is not yet supported by an adequate institutional system. Educators still face budget constraints, a heavy administrative burden, and a lack of support for developing digital competencies.

These structural challenges are exacerbated by disparities in the psychological and technical readiness of educators across regions to respond to the trend of national educational digitization. This study concludes that imposing technological standardization without improving basic infrastructure and mitigating work-related stress will only increase internal resistance among educators. This premise is empirically supported by Yahya and Martha (2025) and Rahmadani et al. (2023), who report that bureaucratic burdens are a major factor hindering the development of professionalism among educators in Indonesia. A contradiction has been identified between the optimism expressed in some studies focused on technology which claim that automated digitization simplifies work and the findings of Harly et al. (2025), who demonstrated that, without system support and a psychologically supportive reorganization of administrative tasks, digital transformation actually triggers a new form of mental workload (technostress) that reduces the quality of educators' performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the overall analysis presented, this research article concludes that strengthening Human Resource Management (HRM) functions including competency-based recruitment, contextual training based on needs analysis, formative academic supervision, and fair compensation has been empirically proven to be a key determinant in enhancing the professionalism of educators in the era of digital transformation. The novelty of this study lies in the finding that educators' low level

of professionalism and slow adoption of technology are caused not only by individual factors but also by the suboptimal integration of HRM functions. The findings of this study indicate that improving educators' digital competencies cannot be achieved through piecemeal training but requires comprehensive reforms in the governance of human resource management in education. The results of this study can serve as a reference for policymakers in improving the management of educators in a more integrated manner.

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